



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:

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Department of Health Seeing Influenza Activity Starting in the State

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Health is reporting that influenza activity has started in North Dakota for the 2012-2013 season, according to Lindsey VanderBusch, influenza surveillance coordinator for the Department of Health.

Twelve cases of the flu have been reported to the North Dakota Department of Health as of Oct. 27, 2012. Among these cases, two have been associated with an outbreak in a long-term care setting.

“Our lab has done testing to determine the exact strain involved in one of the cases and it was found to be an influenza A H3 strain. That is a strain that we expect to see during flu season and a strain that the vaccine should protect against,” said VanderBusch. “Flu vaccine is plentiful this season, and because the vaccine protects against these normally circulating strains of influenza, getting vaccinated now will offer protection from the flu throughout the season.”

It is never too late to protect yourself and those around you from the flu. The health department is urging people, regardless of age or health status, to take time to call their doctor, local public health unit or pharmacy to get a flu shot.

Typical flu symptoms include fever, dry cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache, muscle aches and extreme fatigue. In addition to vaccination, the following precautions should be followed to help prevent the spread of flu:

- Cover your mouth and nose with tissue when sneezing or coughing.
- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water.
- Stay home from work or school when you are ill.

For more influenza information and to order free education materials, visit www.ndflu.com. Reported influenza case numbers are updated every Friday on the website.

– 30 –

Please note: To access archived news releases and other information, visit the North Dakota Department of Health Press Room at www.nddohpressroom.gov. Visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ndhealth.